

Clogged channels frustrate students

By Ken Havelka

The assertion that student apathy is a large part of our campus problems has been used by administrators and student government leaders to rationalize the existence of these problems and to justify their lack of progress in dealing with them. The rationalization of widespread apathy has enabled its users to cathartize their frustrations and effectively avoid the real problem. Does such widespread apathy really exist?

I am convinced that student apathy, defined as a "lack of concern" does not exist in quantity. Those who propose its existence are committing an obvious fallacy. They falsely base their belief in the prevalence of apathy on the observation that few students become actively involved in efforts to change the university. They fail to differentiate concern from activity and neglect to ask why a concerned student is not always an active one. Isn't it obvious that students are concerned, often violently motivated, by red-tape hassles, testing and grading procedures, the quality of instruction and many other issues? Isn't it obvious that the low voter turnout in ASUN elections is due, not to a lack of concern for the issues, but to a lack of faith that ASUN will deal with the issues?

Empty ideals

It is presumed that one of the goals of education in a democratic society is to encourage students to critically analyze, support, and participate in the governmental process. When we compare these democratic ideals with reality we find that they are empty ideals and little more than a convenient facade to hide the real exercise of power. In reality, the educational system teaches students to passively accept their subordinate status.

guest opinion

To find examples of the inaccessibility of input avenues one needs only to open his eyes. Neither the regents, nor the chancellor, nor the vice chancellor of academic affairs meet with a representative cross-section of the student body. The solicitation of student evaluation of course and instruction are perceived to be insincere or ineffective; its uses are not understood and seldom explained. The grading appeals process has provoked students to tears while the highly supportive student backing of such programs as ADAPT, University Studies, Centennial, and Freshman Seminars has not prevented the withdrawal of administrative support and funding.

It's not hard to see that the majority of students are conditioned to accept their powerless state by repeatedly receiving no response to their inputs into their educational system. However, what appears on the surface to be "conditioned apathy" is essentially latent activism. With many channels of input effectively closed-off and other existing channels providing only token representation, what can the average student do?

The prospects for student participation in their governance is not without its bright spots, however.

Power of complaining

Aside from the once a year activity of electing a student government, there are other ways the average student can exert his power. Complaining to those in positions of authority who must take the responsibility for student problems can be an effective method of calling attention to student needs. Some persons in positions of authority that might be contacted by phone or letter include—the regents, the UNL chancellor, the vice chancellor for academic affairs, vice chancellor for student affairs and the ASUN executives.

The Council on Student Life, a joint committee of student, faculty and administrators, has the opportunity to provide significant leadership although specifically limited to out-of-classroom activities by the Regents Bylaws. If ASUN can find competent guidance and experienced senators they can be a powerful student voice, however, the student voters must exercise a more rational and judicious process of selecting their representatives than they have in the past.

In short, the responsibility of voicing student demands and opening channels for student input lies with ASUN. When the voice of the student is listened to and acted upon, the student will speak.

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ralph



Arthur Hoppe

Just Plains Jimmy warms hearts

Good morning, housewives and other shut-ins. It's time once again for another chapter of "Just Plains Folks" — the heartwarming story of one man's inspiring attempt to save the world through love while raising a family at the same time.

As you remember, the head of the family is Just Plain Jimmy, a poor country boy who invented nuclear sub-

innocent bystander

marines in his spare time and was then born again as a humble peanut agribusinessman.

Folks were so impressed they begged him to be their President. He didn't want to but his ma, Just Plain Miz Lillian, said that if she could run off and join the Peace Corps at her age, the least he could do to help out was be President for a while.

So he and his attractive wife, Just Plain Rosalynn, moved into the Just Plain White House up in Washington where they've just plain charmed the local city slickers who've never seen any just plain folks before.

Amy and 'Grits'

Moving into the White House with them was their cute little daughter, just Plain Amy. She has a dog. The dog is named "Grits" to remind her of her humble Southern origins. Amy lives in a suite on the second floor.

Living in suites on the third floor are Jimmy's two

Theodore M. Bernstein

Human also means hu(wo)man

What sex are you, man? Another piece of evidence that the word *man* has usually been regarded as being equivalent to *human*—that is, not necessarily denoting masculinity—has been sent this way by a reader. It consists of lines by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, English poet and critic, written early in the last century. Here they are: "Each sex is necessary even to the special virtues of the other. Man (whether male or female) was not made to live alone." (From "Inquiring Spirit, A Coleridge Reader," edited by Kathleen Coburn.)

Ever see such an one before? That strange use of the article *an* comes up with some frequency in the King James version of the Bible. For instance, in 2 Corinthians, 12 there is a phrase "... such an one caught up to the third heaven" and three paragraphs later there is the phrase "Of such an one will I glory." James McNeal of Bloomington, Ind., notes that the rule these days is to use *an* to replace

bernstein on words

a before a vowel and he asks whether the *an one* is correct. It isn't now, but in the 15th century *an* was used before words beginning with *w* or *y* (and the word *one* begins with the sound of *w*). So there were such phrases as *an wood*, *an woman* and *such an one*. Today, however, we would say *such a one*, *a woman* and *a one-act play*.

Verb tails. The other day I noticed a news article that said a new CBS director "will head-up" a unit with four divisions. That reminded me that it has been a long time since I have mentioned verb tails. But they don't seem to miss my attention; they seem to survive, and for no reason. What, for example, does *head up* say that *head* wouldn't say just as well? The verb *check* is hardly ever seen without a tail—*into*, *on*, *out*, *over*, *up*. Not one of them serves any real purpose other than to keep a fad alive—a fad that would be better dead.

No restrictions. Several TV newscasts have used the

married sons and their wives. Just Plain Jeff doesn't have a job. He has an allowance, though. He is only 24. Just Plain Chip is 26. He somehow managed to get a job with the Democratic National Committee. He makes \$3,000 a year.

A member of Jimmy's staff told reporters that Jeff and Chip are the first two President's children ever to live in the White House who were married. They are also the first two President's children ever to live in the White House who were eligible for food stamps.

Just Plain Jimmy has asked Congress for \$30 billion to stamp out poverty and unemployment.

Doing fine

Everybody else is doing fine. Jimmy's sister, Just Plain Ruth, has found steady work. She's a faith healer. His other sister, Just Plain Gloria, is a simple, ordinary housewife who hates attention. She rides a motorcycle.

Jimmy's 88-year-old uncle, Just Plain Uncle Buddy, is thinking of starring in a film called *Peanuts*. He would play an old man with a peanut-eating dog. But he hasn't signed a contract yet. "I'm busy as a bee," he says. "My time is valuable."

Everybody's favorite, however, is Jimmy's brother, Just Plain Billy. Billy is everybody's favorite because he likes to drink six-packs of Pabst Blue Ribbon and doesn't give a fig for fame or fortune. Billy has just signed a contract with a Nashville talent agency called "The Top Billing Company."

As we join up with Just Plain Jimmy today, he's telling his staff they should spend more time with their families. He says he's going to. Looks like he will. Let's wish him a lot of just plain luck.

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word *deregulate*, writes Mrs. Robert Skelton of Clermont, Iowa, but she can't find the word in either of her two dictionaries. "Are they trying to add a new word to our vocabulary?" she wonders. Hardly; it is a normally formed word and the meaning of the prefix *de-* (do the opposite) makes the word's sense clear. *Deregulate* does appear in Webster's New Collegiate, which is allied with Webster's unabridged, third edition, where the word does not appear. It is not in the second edition either. But that second edition does have the word *deregulationize*. Phew!

Kids compete. Can *with* and *against* be used synonymously after *compete*? The nine-year-old daughter of Bonnie S. Rosen of Newtown Square, Pa., used "compete *with*" one evening, Rosen writes, and her "11-year-old grammar buff, Jackie," said she must use "compete *against*," not "compete *with*." The vote here goes to the nine-year-old. The two youngsters are competing *with* each other and at the same time competing *against* each other for top honors in English usage.

Heard you the first time. An ad quoted an officer of the Baltimore Sun papers as saying, "In my opinion, I consider the Harris 2560 product a significant revolutionary development in newspaper systems technology." What that officer needed was an editor to strike out either "in my opinion" or "I consider." They say just about the same thing.

Word oddities. Not exactly a new word, *interface* as it has been used in recent years is almost a new arrival. Literally it means the point of contact between two parts of matter or areas of space. But as it has been used recently by politicians and pseudoscientists it refers to something that connects or coordinates different programs or systems. Think you need it?

In the derivation of the word *compete*, there is no suggestion of hostility or *against*-ness. It comes from the Latin *com*, together, and *petere*, strive for, seek. So it's a togetherness word but the sense of vie or contend. Some of our competing industrialists should be told about that.

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