

opinion/editorial

Educational priorities are important

Priority decisions are strange things in any institution. But they can become extremely peculiar in a university environment which enjoys better than average football every fall.

The Board of Regents recently approved 10 percent salary increases for the UNL football staff—without even debating the issue. At the same time, Gov. Thone was drawing up his budget recommendations which outlined a 7 percent increase for UNL faculty.

With such discrepancies in salary

raises, it becomes difficult to determine where the state places its priorities—on the football team or the quality of education at its leading university.

Obviously, Nebraska is concerned about the football coaching market and the possibility of losing good coaches. That is one reason for the different dates for salary raises—Jan. 1 for football coaches and July 1 for faculty.

But what about the faculty job market and the possibility of losing good teachers? Isn't January the

time when the faculty job market may also look promising? And especially for a faculty that ranks seventh in salaries in the Big Eight.

While administrators say they will continue to request a 10 percent pay hike for faculty, the fact that football already received its increase shows that the regents are very concerned about the Nebraska football program. Let's hope they share that concern in the area of education.

The university is fortunate that it has quality athletics and that Cornhusker football is so profitable. In

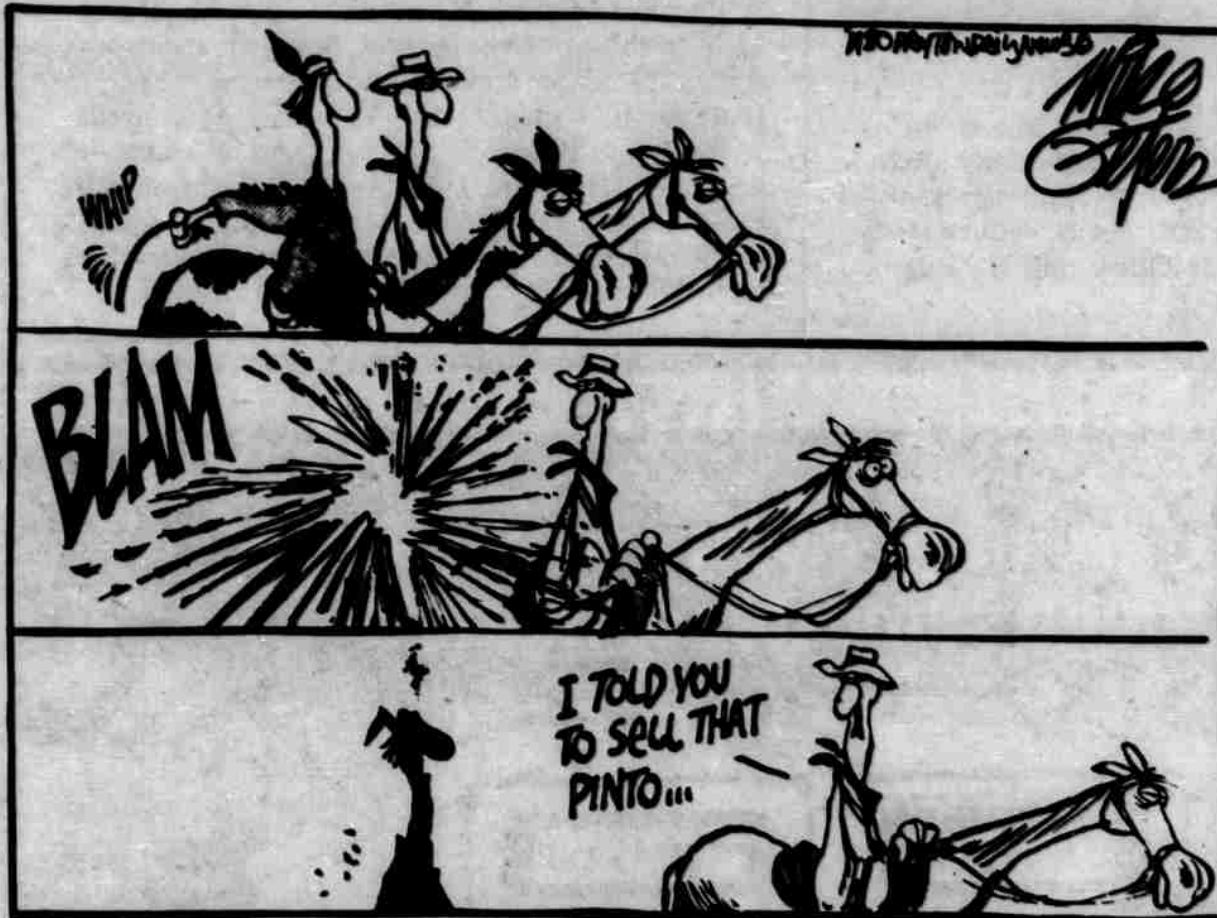
fact, women's athletics have been strongly supported by this surplus income.

But with such successful athletics, it's easy to lose sight of educational priorities and the fundamental objectives of NU.

It all boils down to the quality of university we want in Nebraska and how much we want it. Do we want a university that is proud of its football team, or a football team that is proud of its university?

The decision is all of ours.

Harry Allen Strunk



The trick was to explain Iowa outcome in advance

WASHINGTON—Anyone can interpret the Iowa caucus results after the returns were in Monday night. The trick was to explain them in advance. As a service to regular readers of this column, here are the authorized interpretations of all the possible outcomes in Iowa.

David Broder

If President Carter had won, you'd say: The Carter victory caps one of the most remarkable comebacks in political history. It was fueled by public fury at the capture of the hostages in the American Embassy in Iran, compounded by the crisis atmosphere resulting from the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

While ostensibly removing himself from partisan politics—in order to receive the

full benefits of the presidency as the symbol of national unity—Carter skillfully used the resources of the White House to woo opinion-leaders in Iowa and to rebuild the powerful precinct organization that gave him his first victory in 1976.

But if Kennedy had won, you'd say: The upset victory of the Massachusetts senator was achieved by dint of a quickly assembled political organization which even Carter's backers admitted in advance had made more phone calls and reached more voters than did the President's nine-month-old machine.

The results prove the too easily overlooked point that caucuses are not popularity polls, but tests of an organizational capacity to turn out voters. They also prove that, despite the overhanging international issues, most people vote their pocketbooks. Kennedy's insistent hammering on Carter's ineffective war against inflation—plus his reminder that the President had broken his promise to Iowa farmers on grain embargoes—put the challenger back in the driver's seat in the Democratic race.

If Ronald Reagan had won the Republican caucuses, you'd say: The results in Iowa did no more than confirm what everyone has known since 1964—there is no more devoted band of people than those who have cheered "Dutch" Reagan (as he was known in his Iowa sports-casting days) and cherished the hope that some day he might be President. With former President Ford on the sidelines, no one came close to Reagan in the polls. While his refusal to join the Iowa candidate debate or to campaign extensively in the state may have caused a slight dip in his margin, the results vindicate campaign manager John P. Sears' judgment that, without a serious contest of his own, Reagan was a sure winner.

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letters to the editor

Today, January 22, marks the seventh anniversary of the Supreme Court's decision to give the woman the right to choose death for her unborn child.

Anniversary. The word brings to mind pleasant mental associations of celebrations—laughter, relaxation, and gaiety. So, on this anniversary, is a celebration in order? Here's a toast to all the tiny ones ripped from their mother's wombs. Their only crime was that they were unwanted.

Shall we celebrate? Are we proud of our record of over 1 million deaths annually, due to the abortion of unborn infants? Is our society to be commended for its

acceptance of this widespread destruction of human life?

Echoing some pro-abortion thought, it has been stated that those who decide to go through with an abortion make the choice that is never easy, but sometimes is the only solution. On the surface, abortion appears to solve something. It takes away the baby and it takes away the pregnancy. It leaves the woman empty. Empty in more ways than one. Looking at the long-term effects of the choice, one sees that it is the woman who must live with that choice for the rest of her life. There is no turning around. The unique little being that she carried within her is gone forever.

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Crusade mentality describes anti-abortion push

The idea of a free competition of views ensuring freedom haunts anyone who ever took an American civics course at some point in their education. This idea is why the anti-abortion movement should be worrisome.

The anti-abortion movement ascribes to the crusade mentality, an occasional wave that sweeps over segments of American society in twenty-year cycles. Groups of people band together and decide the nation should take a quantum leap forward or backward, prohibiting this or en-

Jerry Fairbanks

couraging that, returning to the Good Old Days or creating a Great New Society. The goal is philosophical and therefore dogmatic, but it's the means that crusaders use which cause alarm.

The appeal of the anti-abortion crusade is more emotional than cerebral. It is tied to spiritual ideas like an individual soul and a God-given morality. This changes the perspective compared to other political issues where the

debate concerns long-term benefits and costs for society.

The anti-abortionists use this emotional push to convince themselves that the righteousness of their cause breeds rights not allowed to others. They can use personal abuse, twisted logic and shout down anyone who disagrees. They can picket abortion clinics and cruelly harass women who have already suffered a complex personal decision.

The emotions of their movement breed a community spirit among the anti-abortionists, not in any positive, get-the-work-done sense, but with the tacit understanding of being the elect, the upholders of an ideal, the keepers of a flame. This means anyone with reservations about their methods or goals becomes an infidel, one of "them", a *de facto* threat and not worth listening to.

Listening isn't their strong point, either. Discuss the issue with an anti-abortionist, and it's like you're not having the same conversation. They learn rote catch phrases and buzz words to use as belligerent non-answers to questions, speculation squashers and pat "final words" to complexities and conundrums.

Knowing the answers is a nice feeling. I understand why one would want to be associated with a point of view that claims to have The Truth. Putting one's faith in the educated guesses of science and the frank ignorance of a random world is distressing—but it's all there is.

Which brings us to politics. Whose idea was it to take an agonizing personal decision and make it a national political issue? Don't we mere mortals have enough to worry about without snooping into the operating rooms of America?

Part of the answer lies in the unthinking nature of politicized medicine. A politician can get himself large numbers of supporters cheaply by mumbling a few words against abortion. By blowing it into a major campaign issue, a mindless, spineless politician with the moral fiber of swamp moss can cover his own failings and obscure debate on more important issues.

The "Them and Us" aspect of the anti-abortion movement is also contributing to the increasingly fragmented nature of American politics. With single issue candidates and well-financed pressure groups, anti-abortionists make the tenor of politics shallower, and erode the notion of a government for all the people. The spectre of the parts destroying the whole is not impossible.

Since the end of the Vietnam conflict and the resignation of Richard Nixon, truly "national" issues have been few and far between. Now that we've learned we may have to stoop to fighting for our national ideas, perhaps the drive to return to a traditional ideal of sexual behavior will fade into the distance and the anti-abortion issue will become the subject of scholarly articles in obscure history publications.