

opinion/editorial

Subject of DN contest is vital to NU

You may have noticed that today's Daily Nebraskan is different.

In the function of serving our readership, we feel it is our obligation to make news judgments according to the importance an issue may have on the university community.

It was our decision that "how the University of Nebraska contributes to the state" is of utmost importance to our readership, the Lincoln community, and the entire state.

Today we devoted our front page to a contest designed to encourage input into a subject we feel is vital to the well being of the university.

Too many times we have heard the complaint that students, faculty and Nebraska citizens have little opportunity to provide input to the admin-

istrators and the Legislature during the appropriations process. It is hoped that this contest may provide that opportunity.

It is our intention, as letters come in, to publish the best entries on a day-to-day basis. What better way of expressing student views and providing a forum of discussion?

And it may be interesting to discover the many facets of university contributions. For example, did you know that 80 percent of all school administrators in Nebraska earned degrees or studied at UNL? Or that the Nebraska Energy Plan, devised by the College of Engineering and Technology, saved Nebraskans \$460,000 in 1977? How about the fact that more presidents of the American Psychological Association have received

their undergraduate education from UNL than any other institution?

And the contributions just begin. Research in agriculture, water legislation, soil conservation, energy, computer technology, engineering, architecture, and a whole host of other areas not only contribute to Nebraska, but have national and international implications.

The comment that NU is an investment and not an expenditure has been heard too often. It's now time to open the topic up for discussion by people most immediately affected by the university—students, faculty, administrators and Nebraskans everywhere.

Harry Allen Strunk

Cuisine changes tastes

The saying runs "you are what you eat." While that may be true chemically, there aren't too many hamburgers attending UNL.

There are, however, about 900 foreign students here. Most of them weren't accustomed to Nebraska food before arriving. For some, the difference has been a headache; for others, an adventure in American cuisine.

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Jehangir Methani, from Pakistan, characterized the adjustment process. "In the beginning the food here did not agree with me. Now I can eat as many hamburgers as an American."

Was the change really so great? Francis Nicol, from Sierra Leone (on the west coast of Africa), emphasized that it was indeed a big difference.

"Here, I'm deprived of my basic food-stuff, which is 'fofoo.' It's made of manioc or plantains, boiled and pounded. It looks like mashed potatoes but is much more sticky.

"The peanut is also an important part of our main dishes, but here it's a snack. We have peanut butter stew, and use peanut sauces on most of our leafy vegetables," he said.

The variety of food available here impressed him. "Especially in vegetables. I personally like it. My favorite food here is beef noodle soup," Nicol said.

Dennis Law and Steven Tang, roommates from Hong Kong, also picked beef noodle soup as a favorite, but most of all

they like barbecue spare ribs.

Law said they find the choice of foods here very limited. "Our foods are more spicy. Maybe this is why we think there's no variety here. We usually choose our food by the sauce, but here all the sauces taste alike. They have different colors, though."

Tang said he prefers to eat with chopsticks, "but here the pieces of food are too big, so we can't use them. At home, we cut our food into small pieces before we cook it."

Reiko Asano, from Japan, thinks dorm food is "too fattening, especially for girls from outside the United States. One of my friends gained 15 pounds, and she was crying. I don't know why she eats so much."

Asano thinks Nebraskans "should eat more fish." But she added that, because Nebraska is so far inland, it's obvious "we can't get really fresh fish here."

Khossrow Mansoori, from Iran, felt that "the food is okay, but I always feel empty. After two hours I'm hungry again, but I eat much more food here than in Iran. The food in Iran, such as rice and bread, has more starch and makes you feel full."

Jose Guilbe, from Puerto Rico, said that he and his friends miss their island's food. "Sometimes we go to a friend's apartment and cook Puerto Rican food. But we can't get everything we need. Our family sends us some things then," he said.

For Karl-Heinz Brosa, from West Germany, "the change wasn't too great. I like the beef very much. It's much more expensive at home.

"I cook some German food in my apartment. So far, I haven't had any problems getting the things I need. But my family likes to send extras sometimes, like cookies and candy at Christmas."



"But from their ashes shall be rear'd
A phoenix that shall make all (India) afear'd."

—William Shakespeare
Henry VI, Part 1.

Opinions expressed on the editorial page are not necessarily those of the college, university, student body or Daily Nebraskan staff.

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes letters to the editor and guest opinions.

Timeliness, clarity of writing and originality is considered when selecting material for publication.

All submissions are subject to editing and condensation and cannot be returned to the writer.

Politicians, society avoid uncertainties of aging

It was the issue that didn't come up about the man who didn't show up. The shadow subject at the Iowa debates and in the whole election has been Ronald Reagan's age.

In a few short weeks, Ronald Reagan will be 69. He'll be old in an era when we insult age the most by covering it in euphemisms: senior citizens, sunshine years, the golden-agers.

ellen goodman

So far, his Republican opponents have virtually declined to mention what everybody knows. They deal with age as if it were a birthmark instead of a birthday.

I suppose they are being politic as well as polite: No candidate wants to be accused of agism; one man may be ancient at 69; the other, Winston Churchill in the midst of World War II.

But I suspect that the candidates are also uncomfortable with this subject. They are, after all, mostly in their fifties, only one peer group younger than Reagan and uncertain about their own futures. Perhaps they, too, would want to celebrate 70 with an inaugural.

This uncertainty about aging isn't reserved for politicians. Our whole society is aging, and few of us know what we want to be when we grow old.

Our life expectancy today is 73.2 years—69 for men

and 77 for women. If it continues to rise at this rate for 20 years, by 2000 the average life of a woman will be 84 and that of a man will be 74.

Looking at our own future, I suppose most of us hope that there must be a way to age gracefully, to move into another stage of life with more style than we could muster up in adolescence. But at the moment the greatest compliment that the young pay the old is to say, "You don't act your age."

There seem to be two dominating role-models: those who behave as if 70 were really 55 extended a bit, and those who have retired into emptiness. But we have too few people acting as contented guideposts, sending back positive messages of what is ahead.

A Harvard graduate I know came back from his 50th reunion last June with some new insights and observations. There was something different about this reunion, he said, different from the 25th or 40th, for that matter.

The old divisions of background, occupation, success, class seemed to have softened, fuzzed through the spectrum of age. The men were kinder and more open with each other.

In part, he attributed this to their feelings as survivors. But also, he noted, one of the benefits of old age may be in letting go of ambition, competition, status-seeking.

I would rather look forward to this mellow notion than to spending my 70th year on Earth striving to spend the next four years in the Oval Office working 16 hours a day.

But I am also aware that many older people feel, not mellow but useless in age. There is something absolutely

terrifying about those elderly who spend the last time they have left killing time. It isn't only George Burns and his cronies who rebel at the notion of spending the "golden years" bored.

My own fantasies about aging are probably as unrealistic as my young fantasies about mid-life. But they lie somewhere between restless ambition and emptiness. The first, it strikes me, is unseemly; the second is surely premature death. Yet they are the two options for the aged we hear the most about: holding on to mid-life and letting go of all life.

I suppose I fantasize a kind of contentment in which it is possible at last to be engaged and yet somewhat detached, involved but with a perspective, and accepting.

Today the elderly are usually the subjects and not the authors of tales. Our senior citizens are written about as problems and our "Passages" are supposed to stop at mid-life.

The difference between me and my daughter is that I have been both her age and mine. The difference between me and the elderly is that they have been my age and theirs. There are now 24 million Americans over age 65. When I am 65, it is likely that there will be more than 32 million.

We need to hear more about aging from those who have aged well. We need some people from the generation that taught us how to grow up to begin teaching us how to grow old.