

# opinion/editorial

## Second plagiarism charge hurts DN readers, staff

This is the last day of publication for the Daily Nebraskan this spring. Traditionally, some pages of the final issue each semester are devoted to parody, attempts at humor and general disorderly conduct by our student staff.

But these are serious times, with the UNL Publications Board requiring for the first time a minimum percentage of advertisements in the paper each week.

Even a fun-loving student staff thought minimizing financial losses more important than an opportunity to lampoon the campus community.

In some ways, it is good that the whole of this issue attempts to be serious, because today the Daily Nebraskan must make public its own dirty laundry.

A second deviation from long-standing DN tradition in today's semester-ending issue is found in this editorial.

Usually, this space is reserved on the last day for a farewell from the outgoing editor in chief. But for the second time this semester, a letter to the editor charges this semester's editor with plagiarism.

Earlier this semester, Editor In Chief Harry Allen Strunk was charged with plagiarism of a Time magazine article and admitted that he borrowed several words from the article. The Publications Board, acting on what was termed a "serious breach of journalistic ethics," reprimanded Strunk. Included in the reprimand was the statement that any further serious violation of

ethics would be grounds for immediate dismissal.

The Publications Board met Thursday evening, and its decision is included in a news story in today's paper. This week Strunk was charged with using some portions of a Newsweek article by George F. Will in an endorsement of Ronald Reagan; an endorsement we now consider tainted.

The reaction of this newspaper, regardless of the board's decision, is one of sorrow, for ourselves, for Strunk, for the readers, the academic community and, most of all, for the tradition and good name of the Daily Nebraskan.

This semester is over for us, and nothing can be done to change what has occurred, both good and bad.

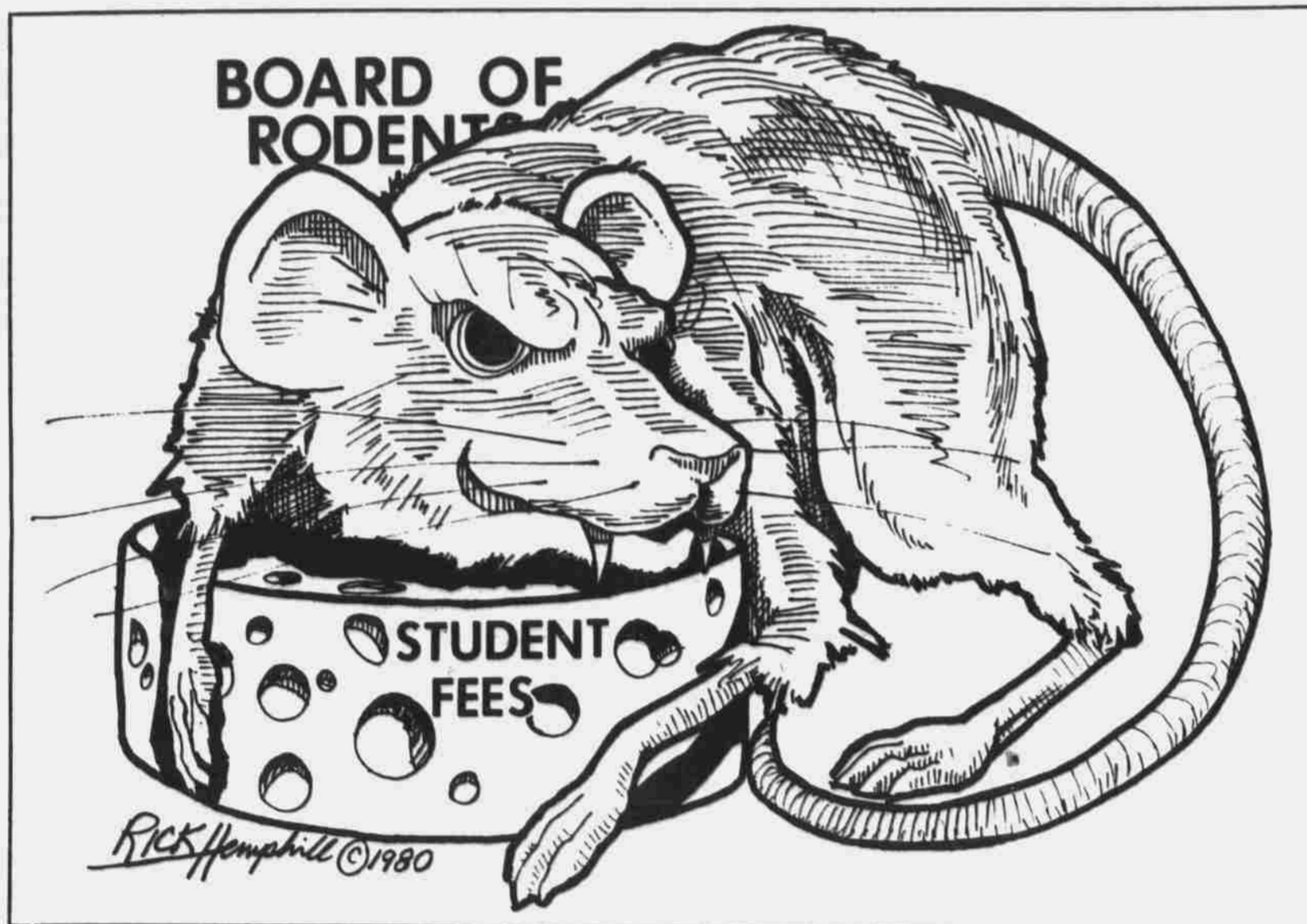
Perhaps it is selfish pride that motivates this statement, but the paper has had some very bright spots through the semester, from our perspective.

Daily Nebraskan staffers who will return in the fall must resolve themselves to look ahead, and plan for another strong student newspaper of All-American caliber.

It is hoped that readers also will look ahead, while continuing to scrutinize the newspaper that strives—and will continue to strive, with or without student fees to serve the university community.

Goodbye, until Aug. 20.

Randy Essex  
Editor in chief  
Fall 1980



## Black struggle is freedom fight

Editor's note: the following does not necessarily reflect the views of the Daily Nebraskan.

Several months ago the university found itself in the middle of a hot controversy concerning the donation of nearly (at that time) \$1 million worth of gold coins minted and sold by the racist white government of South Africa. Since the beginning of the controversy the entire scenario has taken some unusual turns and twists such as: ASUN flip-flopping on their decision to support the return of the coins, Coe demanding the return of the coins, white students forming a pro-Krugerrand or pro-South Africa group and countless attacks on the African People's Union.

### guest opinion

When the APU and others began to speak of the link between the coins and racism in South Africa, many people were shocked and outraged because they figured that surely there was no way that the Coes could have known about all that. They were merely victims of circumstances being martyred and ridiculed by a group of wild-eyed students and faculty who had no respect or pity for the elderly couple. But as the controversy plunged forward, Mr. Coe began what seemed like a regular column in the campus newspaper defending policies in South Africa.

The comments that Coe has made in his many letters have shown beyond a reasonable doubt that he lacks a reliable source when it comes to information concerning the history and conditions of black people in South Africa. First of all he has scored some success in promoting the idea that all the black people of South Africa want are jobs, telephones, cars and handouts—this is far from the truth. The blacks of that region are not fighting for civil rights or affirmative action rhetoric, they are fighting for the basic human rights to control their own destiny and land. That means ALL of the land.

This is something that all so-called Americans should be able to appreciate and totally support. Surely Coe hasn't forgotten that a little over 200 years ago George Washington and others were in a similar conflict with England, and nowhere in his history books does it say that they were fighting for better jobs, more jobs, or any other two-bit concession. The history books state plainly that those American revolutionaries fought unremittently to free themselves from the colonial hold of England so that they would be able to control their own lives on a plot of land now known as the United States of America. The major difference between the American revolution and the revolution being waged in South Africa is the fact that the blacks didn't steal the land they're fighting for.

Coe and others seem to think that the blacks of South Africa should be bursting with joy for the right to slave in unsate mines, live in Bantustans (which is the equivalent of saying niggerville in English), take the left-over crumbs of whites and thank the great white man for making it all possible. He even goes as far as making the remark that certain groups of blacks are separated because "they just love to murder blacks and mixed bloods."

### Letter to the editor

We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on the fine level of reporting and editorializing that your staff has maintained. We feel it has been beneficial to the students of the University of Nebraska to read, almost first hand, the writings of some of the country's major journalists. For example, Harry Allen Strunk's recent editorial endorsing Ronald Reagan (Wednesday, April 30), was written in part by George F. Will, nationally known syndicated columnist. It is insignificant that the editorial re-uses some of the exact phrases and sentences that appeared in a column written by Mr. Will published in the March 31, 1980 edition of *Newsweek*. The only question we have is how Mr. Strunk got Mr. Will to write for the Daily Nebraskan anonymously. One would think Mr. Will makes his living by getting credit for the things he writes.

We anxiously anticipate another editorial by Mr. Strunk and humbly request that he team up with the likes of Jack Anderson or William F. Buckley.

Hopefully next year the epidemic of the "Bubonic Plague" will be cleared up at the University of Nebraska with the advent of a new Daily Nebraskan editor.

Jim Schonewise  
Senior, English

Jon Hedges  
Senior, Journalism

### Clinic: no burden

I believe that the recent article published in the Daily Nebraskan concerning the UNL Law College's Criminal Clinic was inaccurate and unfair.

Many, if not all, of the statements critical of the clinic were presented without any reasonable factual basis and appeared to be based solely on gut-reaction or prejudice. For example, a Lancaster County Judge was quoted as saying that a large number of the clinic's cases went to trial as compared to other prosecutors, although then he

stated that he didn't know what percent of their cases actually went to trial. Also, Mr. Dick Goos, Deputy Lancaster County Public Defender was attributed as saying that he felt his office was defending cases that would otherwise be settled out of court. He also accused the students of being unwilling to plea bargain and questioned their ethics.

The truth is that out of approximately 450 cases handled by the current Criminal Clinic students, only eight actually went to trial. This is less than 2 percent of all the cases handled by the clinic.

The rest of the 450 cases were disposed of by plea bargains, outright guilty pleas, pre-trial diversion, transfer to juvenile court, or were dismissed by the students.

Of the eight cases that went to trial, not all were defended by the Public Defender's office. None of the cases required a jury trial and each required only one to two hours of actual court time. These facts indicate far less of an actual "burden" on the court system or the Public Defender's office than the article seems to imply.

But what is particularly disturbing about the article is its insinuation that the clinic students are callously pursuing innocent defendants and prosecuting them under obscure laws in search of a grade.

It is true that the students are more prone to make a mistake during a trial than a seasoned prosecutor. This is true in spite of the tremendous amount of time and effort devoted to the students by Professor Pokorny. However, it is also true that the high degree of visibility that the clinic is subject to enlarges any mistakes beyond all proportion.

Few people seem to realize that the clinic students will very soon be out in practice, quite possibly defending criminal defendants. The experience they gain in the Criminal Clinic is invaluable. It is far better that they gain experience at the state's expense if need be, than at the expense of an individual defendant.

All students of the Prosecution Clinic

Continued on Page 5