

## opinion/editorial

# Pervasive student apathy smothers needed voice

Even though it might be considered redundant to write about student elections at this point, there is an issue that needs to be discussed.

The elections might be considered by some to have turned out to be a fiasco. Indeed, the delays in computing and releasing the results, the complaints brought up in Student Court and the petty mudslinging by candidates detracted from the credibility of the election.

The true fiasco was the low voter turnout. This is a matter that needs to be regarded not just by an elite few, a traditional few, a radical few but by all students.

Perhaps analyzing apathy only confounds the aggravation.

It might be of some value for all students, no matter what age, no matter what political stances they take, no matter what issues

they care about, to evaluate their reasons for not voting.

That the elections are a joke might be true if students consider their needs worthless.

That the elections are only a futile exercise might also be true if students consider their opinions so.

That it is all a game might be the truth if students do not indicate otherwise.

That ASUN merely spews proposals which are seldom, if ever, carried out by those who hold real power might be true considering the weight that the NU Board of Regents and the central administration seem to give those proposals.

It is easy to ignore a few students. It is even easier to ignore their proposals when they are elected by a few other students.

In this case, the clout of ASUN seems to be a clear reflection of the students' desires. Students don't vote and regents don't listen.

The university seems to be caught in a kind of vicious cycle of apathy that is worsening each year. It approaches the point where it is dividing the ASUN Senate and filling some of the senators with cynicism and paranoia.

If students refuse to vote, denying a real mandate to their student representatives, those representatives become discouraged by the lack of confidence expressed by their constituents and superiors.

An example of this pervading discouragement and dissension was seen at Wednesday night's ASUN meeting. Rick Mockler had just been elected. The process was over for another year.

The senators argued about spend-

ing \$193 for an advertisement in the newspaper the day before the election. It said, "ASUN works for you."

Senators who had run on platforms calling for an ASUN overhaul said the advertisement was misleading, a lie and a waste of student fees. They were answered by more "traditional" senators who said, essentially, "ASUN works and we've always done it this way."

There is now a real need for an effective voice for students. Will we lose important programs, good professors, needed new facilities? Unless students decide to vote, they will have no voice in these matters.

Whether there is a need for change or not, ASUN will never have any effect on important decisions if students fail to vote.

Diane Andersen  
Steve Miller

March 12, 1981 10 a.m.

It was time for my weekly hiatus to the mailbox to see if I got any mail. I only go once a week because I'm pretty realistic about my chances.

Lo and behold there was a lone letter left for me. Even though it was from the U.S. Army, I was still excited until I saw whom it was actually addressed to. It read: Dear Gim P. Warneke.

## warneke

There it was in black and white—another example of the lack of respect that this journalist receives from his fellow human beings. Let me clarify that, I don't just have a lack of respect, I don't get any respect. The letter from the Army was the final straw and I can explain why, but first let me give you a sort of blow-by-blow account of my disrespectful life.

I don't know what it is about me, but it seems like I'm always getting dumped on. Every time someone goes in a restaurant, I get signed up for the 12-and-under birthday club. Since I'm the kind of person who can't refuse an invitation, I average about 10 birthday parties a month. They're kind of fun, but 10-year-old girls are a little young.

And then if my "friends" get tired of that, they sign my name to complaint forms at restaurants and tell the manager that I would be willing to meet with them in person if they would contact me. I get more letters from restaurant managers than I do anyone else. And the only complaint that I can think of when

I meet with them is that they should be more stringent in their birthday club membership.

Those kinds of thoughts used to happen daily, but now it's the nickname things.

Again, some of my "friends" started calling me "Gimp" and it really didn't bother me too much. Since I use crutches, it was basically accurate and it was better than my old nickname of "Ugly," which was also probably accurate.

Anyway, somebody got the smart idea to give my name to the Army as being interested in enlisting. But they didn't sign me up as plan Kent M. Warneke, but "Gim P. Warneke."

So I started getting phone calls asking for Mr. Gim Warneke. For a long time I didn't catch on, but then I realized what else could it be, but another example of lack of respect.

And the bad thing about it was that the Army representatives were so polite. They asked me how classes were going, how I got my unusual name and things like that. They almost got me to enlist with the condition that I could be in one of their neat little commercials with the tanks and all that.

But after a month of this, it got a little old. I still try and be polite when they call, but now every time I'm thinking I should be saying something like "I'm on crutches for God's sake. Gim P. put together is Gimp, get it? What do you want me to do, run the obstacle course in a wheelchair?"

I'm sure sooner or later, the Army people will quit calling me. It doesn't really matter though. It's just a matter of time before something else pops up and shows a lack of respect. Maybe this time someone will tell Frank Sevigne that I'm interested in being on the UNL track team in the 100-yard dash.

## Lack of respect plagues columnist

# Rita wears fur coats, wants to wear blue jeans

As the last journalist in the United States to interview Rita Jenrette, I was properly apprehensive as I wanted to Mrs. Jenrette to join me for dinner at a Chicago restaurant called Cricket's.

After all, Mrs. Jenrette had become suddenly famous by virtue of two acts:

(1) She took her shirt and trousers off for *Playboy* magazine, and (2) She told anyone who would listen all

the terrible things her congressman husband, John Jenrette, did while they were married.

Since approximately 2,784 other reporters had talked to Mrs. Jenrette before my appointment, I could think of very little new information I could possibly elicit from her. Making love on the steps of the Capitol? She had told that story many times. Stepping naked into a hot tub at a Washington party? Old news. Being propositioned by politicians prominent and obscure? Everyone knew that.

## nebraskan

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## greene

I was pondering all this when Mrs. Jenrette swept into the room, bedecked in a black fur coat. We shook hands, and she sat down to join me.

Fortunately, I did not have to think of an immediate question, for Mrs. Jenrette had a piece of news she was eager to volunteer to me.

"I have to fly to New York in the morning," she said. "Milton Greene wants to photograph me. He's the man who took the famous pictures of Marilyn Monroe, and now he wants to take my picture. I think that's nice."

I attempted to tactfully broach the subject of Mrs. Jenrette's attaining all of this startling celebrity solely on the basis of her husband's misfortunes.

"Oh John?" she said. "He called me in my hotel room last night. I don't know how he found out where I was

staying. Do you know what he asked me? He asked me if I would send him an autographed copy of my pictures in *Playboy*. I mean, really? I felt like just hanging up."

She ordered fettuccine, and began examining a letter a man had written concerning an interview she had done with Tom Snyder.

"This is a nice letter," she said. "He didn't like the way Tom Snyder treated me. See this last line? He says that some people just don't have any respect."

Mrs. Jenrette said that while her limousine had been stopped in Michigan Avenue traffic that afternoon, people had gathered around and pounded on the hood.

"They were yelling 'Rita, Rita,'" she said. "I thought that was nice. I opened up the window a little bit and handed them a copy of *Playboy*."

Our dinner arrived, and Mrs. Jenrette said that she had spent several hours recently talking with Hugh Hefner.

"He's really a nice man," she said. "Do you know how interested he is in world hunger? Most people don't know that about him. I told him that if I ever become a big success, I plan to give part of my money to cure hunger in Biafra and Bangladesh. He said that was nice."

We had some drinks. Mrs. Jenrette told me that she hoped I was keeping our conversation in perspective.

"We're two little people on this earth," she said. "We're not important at all. Do you think that people will care what we're talking about 50 years from now? Fifty years from now it will be some other reporter talking to some other congressman's wife. In 50 years, no one will even remember Frank Sinatra."

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