

opinion/editorial

Censors making Midlands seem like Moscow

It's getting harder to tell if some stories in Nebraska newspapers are truly representative of the "Good Life" in Nebraska or of life in the Soviet Union.

In recent weeks, stories about record burnings in Grand Island and censorship of textbooks in Omaha and Bellevue certainly seem more suitable for Pravda than for any state newspaper.

The textbook censorship in Bellevue and Omaha are the most recent cases of an extremist mood that seems to be gaining support throughout the country.

Two textbooks were censored because they contained birth control information, according to a story by the Associated Press.

The incident in Bellevue involved a college-level textbook used by 69 advanced students at two Bellevue high schools. Two pages of the book were glued together so students would not be able to read about contraception, sterilization or abortion.

The Omaha incident is even more shocking because it occurred at the college level. The Associated Press story said: "Seven pages of a marketing textbook at UNO were cut out because they contained a marketing case study featuring a firm that sells contraceptive devices."

Naturally, the two cases have civil libertarians and officials of the Nebraska Civil Liberties Union up in arms.

An official with the Bellevue School said the material was deleted because it violated an existing policy that prohibits the teaching of techniques for sexual intercourse and birth control.

It's obvious that the people running the Bellevue schools have a parochial view of the world. They view the dissemination of informa-

tion on sexual relations and birth control as the springboard from which students will hurl themselves into the sexual revolution.

These parents fail to understand that the sexual revolution wasn't even a skirmish. After years of Victorian attitudes about sex, people began discussing the subject in frank terms in the 1970s, and suddenly, the war was on.

The Bellevue schools should have challenged the archaic rule that prohibits the teachings of techniques for sexual relations and birth control when the subject arose.

Groups that allow information to be withheld from students or the public should not be allowed to alter important issues in education.

Information on these sensitive issues should not be allowed to be exaggerated by calling it

"teaching." The information contained is not teaching and cannot be equated with advocacy of the techniques.

If these people are successful in focusing their narrow-minded views on schools and how curriculum is chosen, then students may learn about a world that doesn't really exist.

The Domino Theory many argued about during the Vietnam War did not hold true and neither will the "if-you-tell-them-about-it-then-they'll-do-it" mentality apparent in Bellevue.

It is indeed sad to think that UNO would allow such provincial thinking to interfere with the education of its students. It is an insult to the integrity of UNO students for someone on their faculty to think college students aren't mature enough to handle that kind of information.



Playoff schedule perfectly clear to baseball fan

I've been having a little trouble following the baseball playoffs so far this year. The game itself is still the same, of course; you sit and watch and scream for your team for a couple of hours, then Reggie Jackson hits a home run in the eighth and the Yankees win. The trouble comes when I try to figure out how many individual games fit into the overall playoff structure by which we are supposed to determine the best team in organized baseball.

pat clark

Feeling just a little bit un-American because I was confused by the national pastime, I decided to call the office of Baseball Commissioner Bowie Kuhn to get a simple explanation. At least I assumed it would be simple; after all, how could they presume to make anything difficult about a game that has been organized into leagues for six-year-old kids?

I didn't get Bowie Kuhn himself on the line, of course; I got an office lackey named Cosgrove who knew the whole picture.

"It's really quite simple," Cosgrove said. Just what I wanted to hear. "You start out with 14 teams in the American League and 12 in the National League, same as always, and divide each league into two divisions, right?" "Right," I said.

"In each league the teams play two seasons, which we call half-seasons, because it was actually one big season cut in half by the strike," Cosgrove said.

"And the teams that win the most games go to the playoffs," I said.

Numbers game

"Not exactly," Cosgrove said. "Not all of the teams play the same number of games, so two teams could have the same number of wins, but one team would have fewer losses, so that team would go to the playoffs."

"However, the team with the best record under the revised format that I just explained would not go to the playoffs if it did not win one of the half-seasons, as we saw with Cincinnati and St. Louis. In that case, you have to go to the team in second place and see if it had the best record, as we had to in the case of Kansas City. Of course, this was only after Kansas City played a special playoff with Cleveland to insure an upper-division finish in the second half-season."

"Cincinnati and St. Louis finished second in their respective divisions, as did Detroit in the American League East, but those teams did not advance and Kansas City did because Oakland won both half-seasons in its division this year."

"So to get into the playoffs, you have to advance through your half-season in your division bracket as the champion, except in the special cases I already mentioned. The playoffs we are talking about now are the best three out of five series, as opposed to the playoff series you are used to, which is also best three out of five games."

Big difference

"What's the difference?" I asked, glad to wedge in a question.

"The difference is that the World Series used to be in mid-October, and now it is in late October and early November," Cosgrove said, as though I would know what that meant. "Of course, that could make for some inconvenience, especially if the Montreal team stays in the playoffs all the way through, but you have to do things this

way to get a true champion from among all of the first half champions and second half champions and divisional champions, excluding, of course, the divisional champions who were not first-half or second-half champions but were the teams with the best records. After all, we don't want any team sneaking in the back door. The integrity of baseball is at stake," Cosgrove said.

"Now in the case of Montreal, it could get very cold up there by November," Cosgrove said. "But they are one of our potential champions coming out of the three games out of five playoff, and they should be given as much opportunity as anybody else to get to the World Series."

"World Series," I said. "I've heard of that. Is that the part where Reggie Jackson hits a home run in the eighth inning of the last game and the Yankees win?"

"Yes," said Cosgrove.

"Oh, well, I've got it figured out then," I said. "I thought for a while there that they were tinkering with the grand old game."

"Never in a million years," Cosgrove said.

letters to the editor

Views on meek different

Casey McCabe (Daily Nebraskan, Oct. 12) doesn't see much hope for the meek. But the promise to the meek about inheriting the earth is made within the context of the world view of Jesus and of the New Testament. For those who reject that viewpoint, the meek can only be seen as impotent fools. The New Testament never suggests that "meekness" will be a successful political move.

The central image of Jesus' world view is the cross; an image of service, patience, humility and an unshakable trust in the ultimate vindication of that meek "lifestyle" by a just, loving God. The image of those he opposed was one of political savvy, power politics, and, indeed, an unshakable faith that only the smart and strong survive.

And the choices haven't changed much. We can choose Jesus' image, and learn to serve each other. Or we can choose other images, holding tenaciously to our bits of land and spheres of power, trusting in our sly diplomacy and the efficacy of our respective nuclear capabilities.

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Informed voters needed

Roger Nimps, Daily Nebraskan, Oct. 8 issue, pooh-poos the notion that one should understand English before being allowed to vote, terming the idea "tainted" and indicative of "the lie in our democratic ideals." Odd — I had thought that the democratic ideal was to have informed voters who would understand the ballots put before them.

Nimps equates the literacy requirement with "Buckleyesque" or elitist methods of government. I would remind him that Buckley has said he would just as soon be governed by the first hundred names in the New York telephone directory as by the faculty at Yale (or was it Harvard?) I am sure Nimps will be quick to observe that this will discriminate in favor of those owning telephones — but such is the difficulty of implementing the democratic ideal.

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