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Campus graffiti reveals vulgarities, erotic art and reflection of feelings

By Chris Welsch and Gah Huey

Anonymous authors have left their marks in the form of graffiti since the dawn of mankind. An unofficial survey on the UNL campus revealed that graffiti is as prolific as ever.

Grffiti found on campus dates back to the hand imprint on a large boulder in front of Morrill Hall, chiseled out by a prehistoric indian.

"Some of the best writing done today is on bathroom walls."—Roger Welsh

However, the more recent graffiti found by two Daily Nebraskan reporters was more creative than the unknown indian's hand print. The drawings and wall writings found in the survey ranged from one word vulgarities and simple art to a lengthy essay on white supremacy and complicated erotic art.

While most campus bathrooms and hallways were relatively void of graffiti, other places provided page after page of printable and unprintable graffiti. Oldfather, Burnett and Richards halls were prime sources. Graffiti found in the survey was notably different in men's and women's restrooms.

In men's restrooms, the writing on the wall tended to be more vulgar (explicit) and derogatory (ethically abusive). Writings in women's restrooms leaned toward more correspondence and advice to other women. The women also seemed to be more romantic.

Opposite sex

No ethnic slurs were found in the women's restrooms and the only group criticized was the opposite sex. "Unite women - throw off your chains" and "Men are dirt" were typical examples found in the ground floor women's restrooms in Oldfather.

The male graffiti artists used many traditional graffiti themes. These included romantic lines ("For a good time call . . .") "Jerry loves Larry" and competitive statements between fraternity houses and residence halls ("Dormies eat here" and "Phi Mus are sickening").

Other popular etchings were about Rock'n'Roll ("Jim Morrison still lives," "Mick is dead" and "The Rolling Grave Stones"), ethnic slurs and, of course, sex.

Sex was represented in art, one-word obscenities and graphic descriptions. The ethnic slurs, found exclusively in men's restrooms, were targeted mainly at Iranians living in America. "Iranian College Degrees, take one" was written beside a toilet paper roll in Oldfather, accompanied by many other unprintable anti-Iranian remarks.

Grffiti, whether it is obscene or artistic, is studied by

sociologists, anthropologists and folklorists, according to Roger Welsch, a UNL associate professor of English and anthropology.

Reflection of feelings

"Some of the best writing done today is on bathroom walls," Welsch said. "Grffiti is often a reflection of people's true feelings. Because graffiti is anonymous, there is never any consequence for writing it."

Peter Bleed, chairman of the UNL anthropology department, agreed with Welsch.

"Ethnic slurs which would not be acceptable in public become outlets for humor and aggression," he said. "Grffiti is inconsequential; the author will never have to argue his point."

"As creative as graffiti can be it is still an expression of boredom, or lack of anything else to do - perhaps comparable to eating peanuts," Bleed said.

The graffiti hasn't changed much in the last couple of years. The main difference noted between graffiti found by the Daily Nebraskan two years ago and today was the insertion of Ronald Reagan's name in negative remarks instead of the past presidents Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter. "Reagan ate here" was a popular slogan in toilet stalls with "Reagan is a fascist" coming in a close second.

Samples of stall statements

If graffiti is some of today's best writing, as associate professor Roger Welsch says, then here is a sampling of the best UNL's walls have to offer:

"Preppies wear their only friends" (Burnett 1st floor men's room)

"Jesus saves green stamps" Burnett - 1st floor men's room)

"Reality is for those who cannot face drugs" (Burnett - 1st floor men's room)

"Roses are red, violets are blue, I've got the crabs, now so do you!" (Oldfather 3rd floor men's room)

"Gee Wally, where's the Beav?" (Love Library - stacks)

"Not on public walls sweetie - there are laws" (Oldfather - first floor women's room)

"This wall is revolting!" - "And so are the peasants" (Oldfather 1st floor women's room)

"Sex is evil
Evil is sin
Sins are forgiven
So sex is in" (Love Library - stacks)

"George Washington slept with Ben Franklin here, Sept. 9, 1781" (Love Library - stacks)

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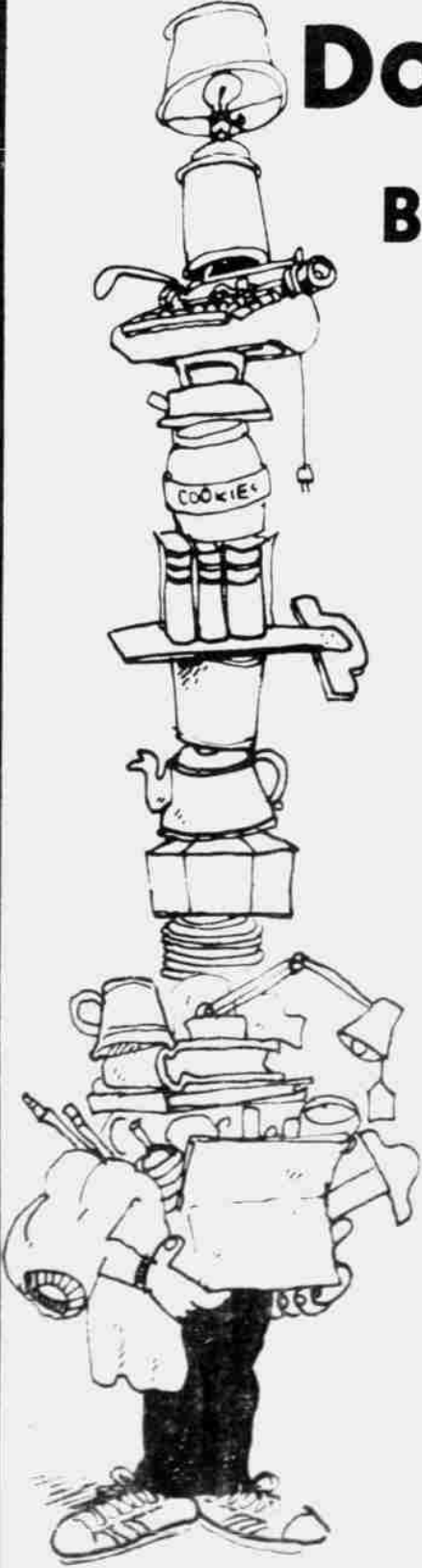
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Meat lab sells steaks shaped like Nebraska

A steak shaped like Nebraska is one of the most popular items sold by the Loeffel Meat Lab on UNL's East Campus, Roger Mandigo, animal science professor, said.

The steaks, prepared from chuck or round steak left over from classroom work, cost \$2.59 per pound, he said.

Mandigo said the meat lab store is a small operation which does not advertise, depending instead on word-of-mouth to attract customers.

The steaks come from steers raised on area farms, including some of the university farms, Mandigo said.

The university operates several farms and field stations across the state, from Plattsmouth to Scottsbluff.

Warren Fahs, director of the field research lab at Mead, said farm employees are hired from nearby communities and are paid by the university. During the summer, up to half of the employees are high school and college students, he said.