

## Editorial



# Bill offers potential variety on Board of Regents

Sen. Peter Hoagland of Omaha has introduced two bills in the Nebraska Legislature that would add three governor-appointed members to the NU Board of Regents. LB735 calls for a constitutional amendment making the change. Voters would have the chance to approve or reject the proposed amendment in this fall's state elections.

LB736 establishes the ground rules for appointment. The new regents would each come from one of Nebraska's three congressional districts.

Hoagland says the measure would make the regents more accountable to the state. Because the regents distribute money allocated by the Legislature, Hoagland sees a need for more unity between the two governmental bodies.

But there are even better reasons for adding appointed regents. The representation now on the board ignores, for the most part, its most important constituency — the students. Perhaps with more variety and more open minds on the board, students might be better able to get their messages across. Perhaps they would be treated as adults with serious concerns, rather than children who don't have a full understanding of the issues.

Appointment could bring that needed variety. The governor could name a woman, a black, or a member of some other under-represented group. The governor also could appoint members closer in age to the majority of students. Even someone in his 30s would have a better understanding of students' problems and remember more vividly his own experience as a student.

As it is now, the board is monopolized by older white men well established in their communities — maybe too well established.

However, voters would have to keep in mind that appointed regents could be only as good as the governor who appointed them. The governor would have to be extremely sensitive to the issues and needs of students and their campuses. And as we all know, a governor easily can lose contact with the realities of university life.

Of course, the regents strongly oppose Hoagland's bills. In a resolution passed at their last meeting, the regents said the board "has been and remains responsive to the needs and interests of the university's primary constituency, the people of this state." But can the regents claim

that they are responsive when they propose irresponsible measures such as the enlarging of Memorial Stadium until its east wall is as high as Oldfather Hall? Or when they take away salaries from student regents?

No doubt, the regents are afraid of losing their positions and power. But Hoagland's bill would increase the number of regents without endangering the positions of the current regents. The only question mark hanging over their seats is their own chances for re-election. Koo-foot, Moylan, Prokop and Wagner face the test this year.

But the regents shouldn't worry. If they have been fulfilling the expectations of the voters in this state, then those same voters will turn down Hoagland's amendment when it appears on the ballot.

Hoagland's proposal is a good one, but it just misses the mark in the question of representation on the Board of Regents. The real issue to be addressed is whether the student regents each should be given a vote, whether those three regents should be given the opportunity to truly represent the students. To that question the Daily Nebraskan responds with an enthusiastic "yes."

## Honesty knows no gender bias

Does a single woman who wants a child have an obligation to ask the consent of the intended father? Should she get his consent or should she simply inform him after the fact or, maybe, tell him as one woman did that the baby she was carrying might or might not be his. Either way, she said, it was none of his business.

I put those seemingly academic questions to you because they are not academic at all. In fact, in 1979



**Richard Cohen**

alone, something like 42,000 babies were born to single women over the age of 30 — no confused teen-agers these. Instead, many of them are women who because of their age thought that while marriage could wait, children could not.

Statistics can tell plenty, but they can not tell whether the men who fathered those children consented to play that particular role. A recent newspaper story, plus some questioning by yours truly, indicates that there is a good chance they were kept in the dark. For instance, two of the women quoted in the article said they withheld their intentions from the prospective (and, it turned out, actual) fathers. One later told him what she (and he) had done, but the other, a true sweetheart, said she refused to say when the father asked if the baby was, at least biologically, his.

As for my own reporting, I find no unanimity on the subject. Some women thought they had a right to keep the man in the dark while others did not. I found one 29-year-old woman who confessed that she was considering motherhood and was not sure if, when she picked the man for the task, she would bother to tell him what, in nine months time, would develop.

I am, I must confess, flabbergasted. The issue, after all, is not whether single women ought to have children.

### Editorial policy

Unsigned editorials represent the policy of the spring 1982 Daily Nebraskan but do not necessarily reflect the views of the University of Nebraska, its employees or the NU Board of Regents.

The Daily Nebraskan's publishers are the regents, who have established a publication board to supervise the daily production of the newspaper. According to policy set by the regents, the content of the UNL student newspaper lies solely in the hands of its students editors.

Through divorce or separation or death or plain old desertion, single women have been raising children since time immemorial. No one is contesting a woman's right to control her own body — to decide when and under what circumstances she will become pregnant. The issue, really, comes down to good old-fashioned honesty. The failure to tell a man he is being used like a retired race-horse comes down to nothing more than a lie.

What we have in these situations is the Frank Serpico case upside down. In that one, Serpico, the famous cop, was sued by a woman who claimed — and proved — that Serpico was the father of her child — a boy. To this, Serpico said the legal equivalent of "So what?" He maintained he hardly knew the lady, that he had sex with her once, that he was assured that she was practicing some sort of birth control and was tricked into becoming the father he did not want to be. For those reasons, he said, the baby was hers, not his — and he was not going to pay one red cent for its support.

The issue in all these cases is honesty — or, more precisely, dishonesty. In both the Serpico case and in the cases of the women quoted in the newspaper interview, the rhetoric of feminism gets thrown around a lot. That makes it sound like we are dealing with something terribly new under the sun, something having to do with the rights of women and a new sensitivity that, if you only gave it a moment's thought, would become stunningly clear.

But that is not the case. The words "men" and "women" only confuse the issue. We are dealing here with people. And what these people are doing is lying to one another — either that or withholding information. What makes it worse is that they are not dealing with used cars, but with the creation of life. A man, like a woman, ought to be able to decide when and under what circumstances that will be undertaken. It should not be produced by a lie.

Men who lie to women ("I'll call you in the morning") are considered cads. And there are even worse words for men who use their physical chips (their strength or the plain fact that they can't become pregnant) to either get sex or avoid the consequences of it — pregnancy and what may or may not follow. Why should it be different for women?

Standards of honesty do not change from one sex to another. Pregnancy does not cleanse all sins nor excuse all lies. After all, no woman gets pregnant on her own. A woman who tricks a man into becoming a father is the flip side of the man who tricks the woman into sex. She is no gentleman.

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## Letters

### Cold, raw, burnt burgers

In response to Steven Hardy's Jan. 20 letter, I have eaten at Union Square six times since it has opened, the most recent Wed. Jan. 20, 11:30 a.m., and each time I have eaten there, the hamburgers are burnt and cold, and on the inside they are very raw. I am sick of the snow job the union is giving the students about its high quality hamburgers. I can get a better 1/4-pound burger at Wendy's for the same price.

If the union is going to attempt to be a fast-food restaurant, it should start serving good hamburgers and not cold junk. Dormitory hamburgers are better than the garbage you serve there.

Dee Hoffman  
Junior

### Evolution roots in science

In her Jan. 19 letter, Sandra George seems to be saying that the creation story should be taught to all school children, regardless of their upbringing, to keep the theory from dying out.

To our knowledge, no one in recent history has learned creationism in a public school, yet the story is in no danger of fading away. As for atheist's children needing to know the theory, it is the prerogative of parents in this free country to raise their children with any beliefs they see fit. If George feels we need to teach the traditional Judeo-Christian account of the beginning of the world, she would surely agree to the teaching of the Navaho creation story, the Hindu creation story, and all of the other creation myths devised by the ancient peoples of the world's many different cultures prior to the era of modern science.

Calling something *science* does not make it scientific. While the creation story is an explanation of how we got here, it has no place in a science classroom. We are not defending evolution; the argument here is not over which is the better theory, evolution or creation. Anyone familiar with Darwin's theory and the assumptions involved knows evolution's shaky stance. But it is a theory rooted in science and the scientific method. The creation story cannot say the same.

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