

# A lustful look at university budget cuts

Sometimes, and I'm the first to admit it, I'm a pretty bad judge of character. For me, first impressions and incorrect impressions are synonymous. Further, no matter how I predict someone will act, I always seem to be wrong. I'm the kind who would have said to actor John Wilkes Booth, "Let's use real bullets instead of blanks - the President's in the audience tonight." I'm the kind who would have told Aeschylus, "A happy guy like you should be writing happy plays."



Mike Frost

And, I am the one who said, "Don't worry, Margie, ASUN loves to be kidded about itself."

But of all the misjudgements I've made, my supposition that Robert Kerrey was one of the smoothest, fairest and most consistent politicians around seems to be the most inaccurate. Obviously, I am referring to Gov. Kerrey's recent support of a \$6 million reduction in the University of Nebraska's operating budget. The decision irritated many in the university community who had been among Kerrey's first supporters when he campaigned for governor, both by its abruptness and hypocrisy.

Hypocrisy because in his inaugural address, Kerrey had called Nebraska's educational institutions one of the state's most precious resources. Abrupt because Kerrey's decision came in the form of a terse statement, supporting Neligh Sen. John DeCamp's proposal to cut back the university's budget.

Actually, I feel a little guilty about the entire situation. I met the governor at the Jefferson-Jackson dinner in Omaha a few weeks ago. At that time, Bob (he insisted I call him that) said to me, "Mike, I'm cutting NU's budget." Not wanting to contradict the state's chief executive, I merely replied, "It's OK, Bob, just don't cut it a penny over \$6 million." I can't help but wonder what might have been if I'd just pushed a little harder.

My guilt aside, however, the manner in which Kerrey announced the reduction of funds did leave something to be desired. I can't help but wonder how much calmer

this news would have been received if Kerrey had just softened his statement just a little. For example, what would be the reaction if, instead of using political rhetoric, he had made his announcement in a letter to the editor of a pornographic magazine:

Dear Penthouse Forum and my fellow Nebraskans:

Ever since I got my new job about six months ago, I had been lustfully eyeing the budget of a major Midwestern university. Lay off, my pals told me, the university budget had been considered untouchable since anyone could remember. Other governors tried to rip into it. However, their attempts to cut it down to size had either been unsuccessful or inept.

Still, I couldn't help but fantasize. Somehow, it must have felt me staring at its overgrown size. "Hey," it said, addressing me, "you're pretty cute for a governor. You can call me Buddie if you want." I was too mesmerized to respond. "Why don't you and I go up to the State Budget office and cut a couple of mil."

Before I knew what hit me, I was in the State Budget Office. I knew I shouldn't be there, but Buddie kept egging me on, daring me to go further.

"Come on, a big ol' governor like you isn't afraid to eliminate an itty-bitty sociology department, is he?"

I lunged forward. "I'll show you afraid," I cried passionately. The budget fell to the floor. I began thrashing and clawing and grabbing at any department I could think of.

Sociology went first. Then history. Then all of the liberal arts. By the time our night was over, all that remained of Buddie was a computer science department that had enough money to buy a couple of pocket calculators.

I lit a cigarette. "Thanks, Buddie," I said, "I feel a lot better now."

Buddie didn't say anything first. She

just winked at me and whispered, "See you next year."

Sincerely,  
B. K., Lincoln, Neb.  
If the governor had only chosen this method, maybe we wouldn't be writing letters of protest. We'd be taking cold showers instead.

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Academic Planning Committee-shall be responsible for the academic program review of new and existing programs.

Central Planning Committee-advisory committee to the Chancellor concerning: space utilization, long range planning & capitol construction.

Judicial Board & Appeals Board-shall hear and determine charges as to violations pertaining to the Student Code of Conduct. Board shall hear appeals of decisions by the Judicial Board.

Academic & Student Life Commission-work closely with the Faculty Senate Committees.

Parking Appeals & Advisory Committes-concerned about parking- give your input on policies.

Teaching Council-work to improve instruction & learning at all levels of UN-L

Recreation Advisory Council-works with the recreation department.

Government Liaison Committee-direct contact with Legislators.

Electorial Commission-Director and member establish the guidelines for the March elections.

Constitution-review student organization constitutions.

Publications Board-acts as a liaison between the paper and its university constituencies.

Applications are available in the ASUN office-115 Nebraska Union.  
Deadline April 20th.

