

Editorial

Dead week policy should prohibit last-minute lecture

UNL's dead week is not dead enough. Like a zombie raised from the grave by mysterious evil powers, the week before finals remains unusually active at UNL.

Dead week was designed to be a time for students to catch up on their work and prepare for finals without the burden of additional assignments.

UNL's policy, approved by the Faculty Senate in 1983, states that only laboratory practical examinations, make-up or repeat examinations and self-paced examinations can be given during dead week.

Most faculty members honor the policy. But some violate the principle of the week by cramming remaining information into the last week of lectures. Thus, students have only a weekend to digest the new material before final exams.

The current dead week policy should be altered to prohibit the last-minute introduction of new materials.

To ensure that no new material is introduced, dead week should be used strictly for review. Attendance should not be mandatory during the review week, so students who prefer to study on their own could do so. But students who have questions for instructors could simply ask during the regular class period, rather than track down the instructor.

Some instructors argue that students would simply use the optional review week as a vacation, instead of studying. Some probably would, but they would abuse any dead week policy.

But responsible students would take advantage of the reviewing and studying time.

UNL probably is not ready for a dead week policy as liberal as that of Harvard University, which has a "reading period" one week before finals. No classes are held during that week.

A reading period would work for highly-motivated students. Unfortunately, unmotivated undergraduates would simply abuse the time, making it a waste of time for students and faculty.

To make dead week more effective, UNL officials should prohibit the introduction of new material during dead week and require that the time be used as review sessions for students.

If the faculty senate enacted this dead week policy, UNL students would be more alive during finals week.

Editorial policy

Unsigned editorials represent official policy of the fall 1985 Daily Nebraskan. Policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. Its members are Vicki Ruhga, editor in chief; Jonathan Taylor, editorial page editor; Ad Hudler, news editor; Suzanne Teten, campus editor and Lauri Hopple, copy desk chief.

Editorials do not necessarily reflect the views of the university, its employees, the students or the NU Board of Regents.

The Daily Nebraskan's publishers are the regents, who established the UNL Publications Board to supervise the daily production of the paper.

According to policy set by the regents, responsibility for the editorial content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its student editors.

The Daily Nebraskan

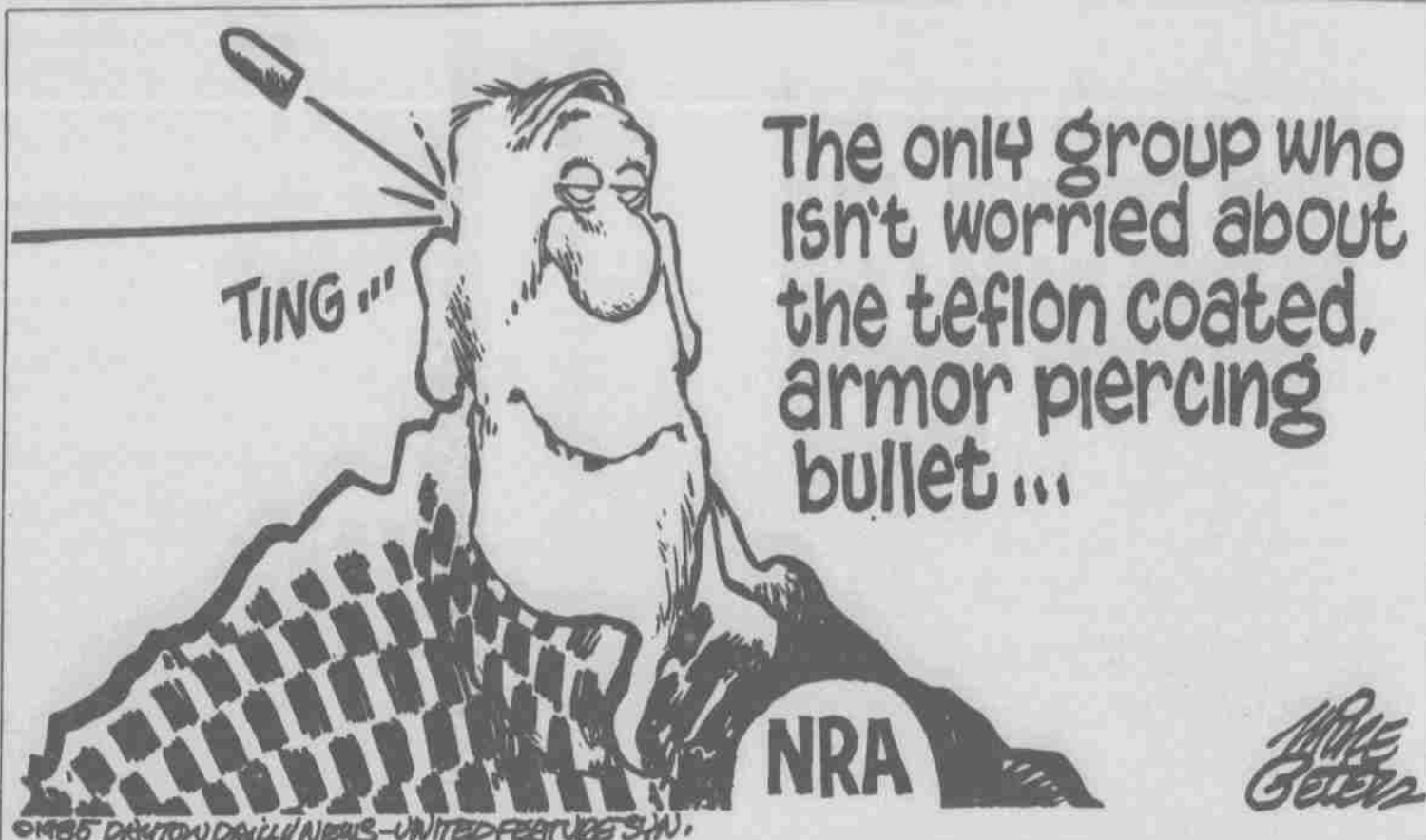
34 Nebraska Union
1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448

EDITOR	Vicki Ruhga, 472-1766
NEWS EDITOR	Ad Hudler
CAMPUS EDITOR	Suzanne Teten
ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR	Kathleen Green
EDITORIAL PAGE EDITOR	Jonathan Taylor
WIRE EDITOR	Michela Thuman
COPY DESK CHIEFS	Lauri Hopple
	Chris Welsch
	Bob Amussen
SPORTS EDITOR	Bill Allen
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR	Barb Branda
WEATHER EDITOR	David Creamer
PHOTO CHIEF	Mark Davis
ASSISTANT PHOTO CHIEF	Daniel Shattil
GENERAL MANAGER	Katherine Policky
PRODUCTION MANAGER	Barb Branda
ASSISTANT	Sandi Stuewe
PRODUCTION MANAGER	Mary Hupf
ADVERTISING MANAGER	Brian Hoglund
ASSISTANT	
ADVERTISING MANAGER	
CIRCULATION MANAGER	
PUBLICATIONS BOARD	
CHAIRPERSON	Joe Thomsen
PROFESSIONAL ADVISER	Don Walton, 473-7301

The Daily Nebraskan (USPS 144-080) is published by the UNL Publications Board Monday through Friday in the fall and spring semesters and Tuesdays and Fridays in the summer sessions, except during vacations. Readers are encouraged to submit story ideas and comments to the Daily Nebraskan by phoning 472-1763 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The public also has access to the Publications Board. For information, contact Joe Thomsen.

Subscription price is \$35 for one year.
Postmaster: Send address changes to the Daily Nebraskan, Nebraska Union 34, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448. Second-class postage paid at Lincoln, NE 68510.

ALL MATERIAL COPYRIGHT 1985 DAILY NEBRASKAN



Orr offers true leadership

*By wholesome laws to embank the sovereign power,
To deepen by restraint, and by prevention*

Of Lawless will to amass and guide the flood

In its majestic channel, is man's task

And the true patriot's glory!
— Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "Zapoyla" Prelude (1906)

Several years ago Soviet dissident Alexander Solzhenitsyn bemoaned the fact that U.S. politicians never rise much above mediocrity because of the "dozens of traps" set for any person who would dare to lead.



Jim Rogers

Some time ago, as I reflected upon the possible Republican gubernatorial candidates, Solzhenitsyn's comment seemed sadly apropos to Nebraska, and I confessed to a friend my rather lackluster attitude respecting the upcoming race.

I told my friend that my anguish was compounded by the adamant way the single bright spot in the campaign — State Treasurer Kay Orr — asserted her reluctance to enter the race. My attitude is much improved since Orr

announced her candidacy for governor. Orr's candidacy is one of the most exciting political developments in Nebraska in more than a decade.

Given the false praise, self-puffery and empty platitudes that stagnate the atmosphere of most political campaigns (and cause me to glance askance at the politicians' claims), Orr's candidacy is a breath of fresh air.

The case for Orr can be summed up thus: calling, competence and community.

Several commentators have observed that a sense of calling is largely lost in today's political world. Many candidates eagerly seek the power of political office. This seems to be a particularly obvious bane among Nebraska politicians. Yet Orr is unique.

In a conversation with her last week, she said that it was "never one (of her) goals to run for office, never an aspiration." Now, although such claims are often proffered by candidates in a poorly acted fit of false modesty, it rings true in Orr's case.

Orr has been deeply involved in politics for several decades and has had many chances to pursue political ambition, yet she did not. Rather, Orr has moved "up" in the political world, as it were, by being called into positions of progressively greater responsibility.

Orr's calling naturally begs that this question be addressed: Why? The answer is similarly straight forward.

The reason is extreme competence. Her experience in politics and government has manifested the attributes of a true leader: She is levelheaded, articulate and realistic, yet deeply committed to a vision of how government can best serve people.

As Orr indicated, her style is non "confrontational." Rather she desires to "focus on a broader approach" to solve Nebraska's problems. To most politicians, the long run is irrelevant; to Orr, it is the criterium of successful government.

Finally, Orr is committed to the Nebraska community. George Will wrote a tribute that fits Orr and her ideals: "In the best and most mature polities, what government does is encourage society to do things through its organic working. Government can do this by enhancing, in many ways, the vigor of those intermediary institutions which shape, support and inspire individuals, drawing persons out of the orbits of individualism and into social relationships."

For years now there has been a death of Republican leadership in state government. What leadership that has existed has been parochial and uninspired. Orr represents a bold departure from the party's seemingly endemic mediocrity. The state can ill afford to overlook the opportunity to elect a leader with Orr's capability and vision.

Rogers is a UNL graduate economics student and a law student.

Mom's in jail, Dad's in question

A Springfield, Ill., judge has tossed a woman into jail for a really shocking offense — trying to protect her own child.

Judge Stuart Shiffman is furious because the woman didn't obey his order to let her ex-husband, the child's father, have weekend visitation rights.

The woman's reason for not obeying the judge? There are indications — found by a state agency — that the child, 5, may have been sexually molested by her own father.



Mike Royko

And what makes Judge Shiffman's jailing of the woman even more bizarre is that the woman couldn't legally allow the visitation rights if she wanted to. The state, in an emergency move, has taken custody of the child to protect her.

Because a child is involved, I am not going to use the family's name.

But the story began when the child was about 1½ years old, and the couple was separated but still married. Things the little girl said made the mother suspect that her husband might have been sexually abusing her on the weekends he had the child.

She called the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services and

they sent her to a psychologist who specializes in sex-abuse cases. In interviewing the child and testing her, the psychologist and a hospital found indications of abuse.

At that point, DCFS stepped in. There wasn't enough evidence for legal action to be taken against the husband, but they got a court order requiring a caseworker be present when the father had weekend visits with the child.

When this happened, the father soon stopped seeing the child or contacting the mother. Eventually, the couple was divorced. But recently the father went to court and demanded full custody.

In hearing the custody case, Judge Shiffman refused to admit testimony about the possibility of sexual abuse. He said it was old evidence. And he ordered that the husband be given unsupervised custody of the child on alternate weekends until a hearing was held on the question of full custody.

It was after this hearing last week that the sex therapist who had treated the child decided to contact the Department of Family Services.

That's when the case took a remarkable legal twist.

DCFS has emergency authority to take custody of a child for 48 hours if it believes the child is in danger. And it can do this without a court hearing. After the 48 hours, a hearing must be held. So, on Friday, DCFS exercised this authority, took custody of the child and gave her to an aunt.

Because weekends don't count in the 48 hours, the child was in the aunt's custody, under state protection, when the mother went to Judge Shiffman's court on Monday. And the judge blew up. Spectators said he had a "temper tantrum."

He sentenced the mother to three days in jail without bond for contempt of court. He also said that if he could, he would jail the DCFS supervisor and the psychologist.

Once again, he wouldn't permit them to testify about the alleged sexual abuse.

So now DCFS will go to another court and get a judge to let them have custody of the child until a full hearing on the alleged sex abuse can be held.

But meanwhile, the mother is in the pokey. And when she gets out of jail later this week, Judge Shiffman says he's going to again order her to give the kid to the father for the weekend. If she doesn't, she will be back in jail until she obeys.

The judge refuses to discuss his ruling. But, in fairness, I should say something in his behalf: Sure, he put the mother in jail. And, true, he said he wished he could toss the DCFS supervisor and the psychologist in jail. But, hey, at least he didn't say anything about throwing the kid in jail.

©1985 by the Chicago Tribune
Distributed by Tribune Media Services Inc.

Royko is a Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist for the Chicago Tribune.